Pandemic Influenza

Preparedness and Response

Individual and Family

Individual and Family Planning Checklist

• You can prepare for PI now. You should know both the magnitude of what can happen during a pandemic outbreak and what actions you can take to help lessen the impact of PI on you and your family. This checklist will help you gather the information and resources you may need in case of a flu pandemic.

- **Plan for PI**

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• Store a two week supply of water and food. During a pandemic, if you cannot get to a store, or if stores are out of supplies, it will be important for you to have extra supplies on hand. This can be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages and disasters.

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• Periodically check your regular prescription drugs to ensure a continuous supply in your home.

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• Have any nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes, and vitamins.

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• Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would be cared for if they got sick, or what will be needed to care for them in your home.

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• Volunteer with local groups to prepare and assist with emergency response.

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- Get involved in your community as it works to prepare for PI.

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- To limit the spread of germs and prevent infection:

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- Teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water, and model the correct behavior.

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- Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues, and be sure to model that behavior.

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- Teach your children to stay away from others as much as possible if they are sick. Stay home from work and school if sick.

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- Items to have on hand for an extended stay at home:

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- Examples of food and non-perishables:

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- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fish, fruits, vegetables, beans, and soups.

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- Protein or fruit bars.

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- Dry cereal or granola.

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- Peanut butter or nuts.

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- Dried fruit.

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- Crackers.

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- Canned juices.

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- Bottled water.

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- Canned or jarred baby food and formula.

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- Pet food.

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- Other non-perishable items.

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- Examples of medical, health, and emergency supplies:

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- Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood-pressure monitoring equipment.

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- Soap and water, or alcohol-based (60-95%) hand wash.

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- Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.

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- Thermometer.

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- Anti-diarrheal medication.

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- Vitamins.

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- Fluids with electrolytes.

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- Cleansing agent/soap.

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- Flashlight.

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- Batteries.

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- Portable radio.

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- Manual can opener.

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- Garbage bags.

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- Tissues, toilet paper, disposable diapers.

Individual and Family Planning Checklist

- **Family Emergency Health Information Sheet**

  - It is important to think about health issues that could arise if an influenza pandemic occurs, and how they could affect you and your loved ones. For example, if a mass vaccination clinic is set up in your community, you may need to provide as much information as you can about your medical history when you go, especially if you have a serious health condition or allergy.

  - Create a family emergency health plan using this information. Fill in information for each family member in the space provided. Like much of the planning for a pandemic, this can also help prepare for other emergencies.

- **Family Member Information**

Family Member	Blood Type	Allergies	Past / Current Medical Conditions	Current Medications / Dosages

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- **Interim Guidance: Taking Care of a Sick Person in Your Home**

  - H1N1 flu virus infection (formerly known as swine flu) can cause a wide range of symptoms, including fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with H1N1 flu. Like seasonal flu, H1N1 flu in humans can vary in severity from mild to severe. Severe disease with pneumonia, respiratory failure and even death is possible with H1N1 flu infection. Certain groups might be more likely to develop a severe illness from H1N1 flu infection, such as pregnant women and persons with chronic medical conditions. Sometimes bacterial infections may occur at the same time as or after infection with influenza viruses and lead to pneumonias, ear infections, or sinus infections.

  - The following information can help you provide safer care at home for sick persons during a flu outbreak or flu pandemic.

- **How the Flu Spreads**

  - The main way that influenza viruses are thought to spread is from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. This can happen when droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person are propelled through the air and deposited on the mouth or nose of people nearby. Influenza viruses may also be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets on another person or an object and then touches their own mouth or nose (or someone else's mouth or nose) before washing their hands.

  - People with H1N1 flu who are cared for at home should:

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- Check with their health care provider about any special care they might need if they are pregnant or have a health condition such as diabetes, heart disease, asthma, or emphysema.

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- Check with their health care provider about whether they should take antiviral medications.

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- Stay home for 7 days after your symptoms begin or until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours, whichever is longer, except to seek medical care or for other necessities.

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- Get plenty of rest.

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- Drink clear fluids (such as water, broth, sports drinks, electrolyte beverages for infants) to keep from being dehydrated.

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- Cover coughs and sneezes. Clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub often and especially after using tissues and after coughing or sneezing into hands.

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- Wear a facemask – if available and tolerable – when sharing common spaces with other household members to help prevent spreading the virus to others. This is especially important if other household members are at high risk for complications from influenza.

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- Avoid close contact with others – do not go to work or school while ill.

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- Be watchful for emergency warning signs that might indicate you need to seek medical attention.

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- Get medical care right away if the sick person at home:

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- Has difficulty breathing or chest pain.

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- Has purple or blue discoloration of the lips.

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- Is vomiting and unable to keep liquids down.

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- Has signs of dehydration such as dizziness when standing, absence of urination, or in infants, a lack of tears when they cry.

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- Has seizures (for example, uncontrolled convulsions).

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- Is less responsive than normal or becomes confused.

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- **Medications to Help Lessen Symptoms of the Flu**

  - Check with your healthcare provider or pharmacist for correct, safe use of medications.

  - Antiviral medications can sometimes help lessen influenza symptoms, but require a prescription. Most people do not need these antiviral drugs to fully recover from the flu. However, persons at higher risk for severe flu complications, or those with severe flu illness who require hospitalization, might benefit from antiviral medications. Antiviral medications are available for persons 1 year of age and older. Ask your health care provider whether you need antiviral medication.

  - Influenza infections can lead to or occur with bacterial infections. Therefore, some people will also need to take antibiotics. More severe or prolonged illness or illness that seems to get better, but then gets worse again may be an indication that a person has a bacterial infection. Check with your health care provider if you have concerns.

  - Warning! Do not give aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid) to children or teenagers who have the flu; this can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye's syndrome. For more information about Reye's syndrome, visit the National Institute of Health website.

    - Check ingredient labels on over-the-counter cold and flu medications to see if they contain aspirin.

    - Children 5 years of age and older and teenagers with the flu can take medicines without aspirin, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®, Nuprin®), to relieve symptoms.

    - Children younger than 4 years of age should NOT be given over-the-counter cold medications without first speaking with a health care provider.

Individual and Family Planning Checklist

- **Medications to Help Lessen Symptoms of the Flu**

  • The safest care for flu symptoms in children younger than 2 years of age is using a cool-mist humidifier and a suction bulb to help clear away mucus.

  • Fevers and aches can be treated with acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®, Nuprin®) or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS). Examples of these kinds of medications include:

Generic Name	Brand Name(s)
Acetaminophen	Tylenol®
Ibuprofen	Advil®, Motrin®, Nuprin®
Naproxen	Aleve

  • Over-the-counter cold and flu medications used according to the package instructions may help lessen some symptoms such as cough and congestion. Importantly, these medications will not lessen how infectious a person is.

  • Check the ingredients on the package label to see if the medication already contains acetaminophen or ibuprofen before taking additional doses of these medications—don't double dose! Patients with kidney disease or stomach problems should check with their health care provider before taking any NSAIDS.

- **Steps to Lessen the Spread of Flu in the Home**

  • When providing care to a household member who is sick with influenza, the most important ways to protect yourself and others who are not sick are to:

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- Keep the sick person away from other people as much as possible, especially others who are at high risk for complications from PI.

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- Remind the sick person to cover their coughs, and clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub often, especially after coughing and/or sneezing.

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- Have everyone in the household clean their hands often, using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. Children may need reminders or help keeping their hands clean.

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- Ask your health care provider if household contacts of the sick person—particularly those contacts who may be pregnant or have chronic health conditions—should take antiviral medications such as oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) or zanamivir (Relenza®) to prevent the flu.

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- If you are in a high risk group for complications from influenza, you should attempt to avoid close contact (within 6 feet) with household members who are sick with influenza. If close contact with a sick individual is unavoidable, consider wearing a facemask or respirator, if available and tolerable. Infants should not be cared for by sick family members.

Individual and Family Planning Checklist

- **Placement of the Sick Person**

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- Keep the sick person in a room separate from the common areas of the house. (For example, a spare bedroom with its own bathroom, if that's possible.) Keep the sickroom door closed.

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- Unless necessary for medical care or other necessities, people who are sick with an influenza-like-illness should stay home and minimize contact with others, including avoiding travel, for 7 days after their symptoms begin or until they have been symptom-free for 24 hours, whichever is longer. Children, especially younger children, might potentially be contagious for longer periods.

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- If persons with the flu need to leave the home (for example, for medical care), they should wear a facemask, if available and tolerable, and cover their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing.

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- Have the sick person wear a facemask – if available and tolerable – if they need to be in a common area of the house near other persons.

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- If possible, sick persons should use a separate bathroom. This bathroom should be cleaned daily with household disinfectant

Individual and Family Planning Checklist

- **Protect other persons in the home**

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- The sick person should not have visitors other than caregivers. A phone call is safer than a visit.

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- If possible, have only one adult in the home take care of the sick person. People at increased risk of severe illness from flu should not be the designated caretaker, if possible.

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- If you are in a high risk group for complications from influenza, you should attempt to avoid close contact (within 6 feet) with household members who are sick with influenza. If close contact with a sick individual is unavoidable, consider wearing a facemask or respirator, if available and tolerable.

Not Started ◯ In Progress ◯ Completed ◯

- Avoid having pregnant women care for the sick person. (Pregnant women are at increased risk of influenza-related complications and immunity can be suppressed during pregnancy).

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- Avoid having sick family members care for infants and other groups at high risk for complications of influenza.

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- All persons in the household should clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub frequently, including after every contact with the sick person or the person’s room or bathroom.

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- Use paper towels for drying hands after hand washing or dedicate cloth towels to each person in the household. For example, have different colored towels for each person.

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- If possible, consideration should be given to maintaining good ventilation in shared household areas (e.g., keeping windows open in restrooms, kitchen, bathroom, etc.).

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- Antiviral medications can be used to prevent the flu, so check with your health care provider to see if some persons in the home should use antiviral medications.

- **If you are the Caregiver**

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- Avoid being face-to-face with the sick person.

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- When holding small children who are sick, place their chin on your shoulder so that they will not cough in your face.

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- Clean your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub after you touch the sick person or handle used tissues, or laundry.

Individual and Family Planning Checklist

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- Talk to your health care provider about taking antiviral medication to prevent the caregiver from getting the flu.

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- If you are at high risk of influenza associated complications, you should not be the designated caretaker, if possible.

Not Started ◯ In Progress ◯ Completed ◯

- If you are in a high risk group for complications from influenza, you should attempt to avoid close contact (within 6 feet) with household members who are sick with influenza. Designate a person who is not at high risk of flu associated complications as the primary caretaker of household members who are sick with influenza, if at all possible. If close contact with a sick individual is unavoidable, consider wearing a facemask or respirator, if available and tolerable.

Not Started ◯ In Progress ◯ Completed ◯

- Monitor yourself and household members for flu symptoms and contact a telephone hotline or health care provider if symptoms occur.

- **Using Facemasks or Respirators**

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- Avoid close contact (less than about 6 feet away) with the sick person as much as possible.

Individual and Family Planning Checklist

Not Started ◯ In Progress ◯ Completed ◯

- If you must have close contact with the sick person (for example, hold a sick infant), spend the least amount of time possible in close contact and try to wear a facemask (for example, surgical mask) or N95 disposable respirator.

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- An N95 respirator that fits snugly on your face can filter out small particles that can be inhaled around the edges of a facemask, but compared with a facemask it is harder to breathe through an N95 mask for long periods of time. More information on facemasks and respirators can be found at www.flu.gov.

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- Facemasks and respirators may be purchased at a pharmacy, building supply or hardware store.

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- Wear an N95 respirator if you help a sick person with respiratory treatments using a nebulizer or inhaler, as directed by their doctor. Respiratory treatments should be performed in a separate room away from common areas of the house when at all possible.

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- Used facemasks and N95 respirators should be taken off and placed immediately in the regular trash so they don’t touch anything else.

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- Avoid re-using disposable facemasks and N95 respirators, if possible. If a reusable fabric facemask is used, it should be laundered with normal laundry detergent and tumble-dried in a hot dryer.

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- After you take off a facemask or N95 respirator, clean your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- **Household Cleaning, Laundry, and Waste Disposal**

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- Throw away tissues and other disposable items used by the sick person in the trash. Wash your hands after touching used tissues and similar waste.

Not Started ◯ In Progress ◯ Completed ◯

- Keep surfaces (especially bedside tables, surfaces in the bathroom, and toys for children) clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant according to directions on the product label.

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- Linens, eating utensils, and dishes belonging to those who are sick do not need to be cleaned separately, but importantly these items should not be shared without washing thoroughly first.

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- Wash linens (such as bed sheets and towels) by using household laundry soap and tumble dry on a hot setting. Avoid “hugging” laundry prior to washing it to prevent contaminating yourself. Clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub right after handling dirty laundry.

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- Eating utensils should be washed either in a dishwasher or by hand with water and soap.

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- Linens, eating utensils, and dishes belonging to those who are sick do not need to be cleaned separately, but importantly these items should not be shared without washing thoroughly first.

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